(B) Action Taken Report in respect of decisions taken in the 33rd Standing Labour Committee on 13.9.95

Recommendation	Action Taken
3. The Conference noted its concern. over the delay in implementation of the Turn Around Plan for revival of sick mills of NTC even after its approval by the Cabinet. Therefore, Labour Ministry should convene a meeting of Union Ministries of Labour, Finance and Textiles and Trade Unions and the concerned State Governments to expedite a decision in the matter. In the meantime, Ministry of Textiles should take steps to pay wages in time and bonus before Diwali, 1996.	In order to expedite the decision in the matter of revival of NTC mills, the Cabinet constituted a Committee consisting of Secretary, Textiles as Chairman, Secretary (Expenditure), Secretary (Labour), Adviser (Planning Commission), a Technical expert as its members and CMD, NTC (HC) as Member Secretary to go into the issue of techno-cconomic viability of each mill. The report of this Committee was discussed in a -Cabinet Meeting on 19th August, 1997. The Cabinet in . turn decided that the matter may be looked into by a Group of Ministers (GOM) consisting of Minister of Industry, Minister of Finance and Minister of Textiles. The Ministry of Labour has been taking up the matter of non-payment of wages and other statutory dues to workers employed in CPSUs with the concerned administrative Ministries. As a result of these initiatives, the Ministry of Textiles has been able to pay the wages to NTC workers upto end of June, 1997. The bonus for workers of NTC was released before Diwali, 1996.

New Industrial Policy for the North-East

*374. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new industrial policy has been formulated for North-East region last year;

(b) if so, its salient features;

(c) whether other regions/areas have been identified which are backward and need special efforts for industrialisation; and

(d) if so, the details and packages, if any, for their "development?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) A new industrial policy for the North Eastern Region was announced by the Government on December 24, 1997. The salient features of the policy are as follows:—

1. Entire expenditure on Growth Centres, upto Rs. 15 crores would . be met through Central assistance.
2. Funding pattern for Integrated Infrastructure Development Centres (IIDCs) changed to 4:1 between Government of India and SIDBI.
3. Transport subsidy scheme extended upto 31.3.2007 and amount to be disbursed through North-East Development Financial Corporation.
4. Growth Centres & IIDCs become tax-free zones for income tax and excise for 10 years and 15% subsidy

on Plant & Machinery subject to a ceiling of Rs. 30 lakhs.

5. An interest subsidy of 3% on the working capital loans would be provided for a period of ten years after the commencement of production.

6. Comprehensive Insurance Scheme for new industrial units.

(c) and (d) Balanced regional development through locations! dispersal of industries has been one of the principal objectives of the successive Five Year Plans. Government of India has specified 123 Districts as industrially backward districts under category 'A and category 'B'. With a view to achieving balanced regional development and particularly promoting industrialisation of backward areas, Government has provided various incentives/concessions from time to time, the important ones being the Growth Centre Scheme, Transport Subsidy Scheme, and the Integrated Infrastructural Development Scheme (IIDS).

Impact of falling Tobacco Exports on Farmers In Andhra Pradesh

*375. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tobacco Board has studied the impact of falling exports on the farming community in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that demand has declined due to-such falling tobacco exports;

(c) what steps the Tobacco Board is taking to revive the tobacco economy of Andhra Pradesh;

(d) whether any survey has been done by NCAER or other such body to improve the tobacco economy; and

(e) if sc-, the full details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) The total quantity and value of export of tobacco (manufactured & unmanufactured) during the last four years are as follows:—

	Quantity in tons	Value in Rs. crores
1994-95	53731	254.75
1995-96	87094	446.82
1996-97	116910	756.77
1997-98	142896	1058.50
1998-99 (April)	7330	66.46
1997-98 (April)	2009	14.55

(Source: DGCI&S, Calcutta)

Exports of tobacco have shown an increasing trend during the last four years.

(c) Some of the steps taken to enhance exports of tobacco and tobacco products include, inter-alia, reorientation of the domestic production of tobacco to meet changing international needs, enhancement of quality and productivity levels, monitoring and strict control of pesticide residues, aligning grading to international standards, and permitting imports for product development.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. NCAER conducted a study in 1994 on Export Potential of Tobacco Sector. Some of the recommendations made in the study, inter-alia, include enhancing production of exportable varieties of tobacco, involving domestic cigarette manufacturers in the area of commercial cultivation of exportable type of tobacco, educating farmers on optimal utilisation of fertilisers to reduce unit cost of production, aligning grading at farmers level to international standards, monitoring and control of pesticide residues, dissemination of international market information to exporters and growers, improving quality and packaging of Indian cigarettes, developing international bidis and exploring new narkets, and review of taxation burden